Vol. VII. Numb. 80

THE OBSERVATOR.

That the Convention and ſucceeding Parliaments re-aſſerted their coercive Power over ſuch Princes as violate our Conſtitution, demonſtrated againſt the Rehearſer. *On the Speech of the Lords Commiſſioners to the Parliament,* Nov. 18. *and particularly on the confirming and improving of the Union.*

From Wednesday, November 17. to Saturday, November 20. 1708.

Country-m. THE *Rehearſer* inſults you terribly, Maſter: He crows ſo, that you muſt certainly cut his Comb a little.

Obſ. There's nothing can juſtify me, *Roger*, to trouble my Self farther with him, but *Solomon*'s Advice, *To anſwer a Fool according to his Folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own Conceit:* For when once a Man comes to proſtitute his Character ſo far, as ſhameleſsly to deny Matter of Fact, that is univerſally known to be true, and to pervert Scripture contrary to the expreſs Words of the Text, 'tis to as little Purpoſe to reaſon with ſuch a Man, as with the greateſt Lunatick in *Bedlam*.

Country-m. I own that, Maſter; but the ignorant People of his Faction, will cry out Victory! if you don't reply to him; and particularly to his bold Aſſertion, 'That the Convention did not proceed 'upon the Foot of Coercion, but upon King *James*'s 'Reſignation, which they call'd Abdication; that 'is, a voluntary Act. And this, he ſays, is prov'd againſt you by the Debates you produc'd.

Obſ. That's ſuch a notorious Piece of Falſhood, *Roger*, as ſhews the *Rehearſer* to be liſted in the Service of him that was a Liar from the Beginning. Any Man who does but caſt his Eye upon thoſe Debates, will be able to ſee, that this is a ſtudy'd Lie, and directly contrary to the Senſe not only of thoſe call'd Whigs, but alſo of thoſe whom he and his Party do reckon to be Tories; for pag. 60. of the Debates, the Earl of *Clarendon* ſays, he thinks it very apparent, that King *James* had done no voluntary Act, whereby he had diveſted himſelf of the Royalty, by Renunciation or Reſignation; which his Lordſhip took to be the Meaning of the Word Abdication, in all the Inſtances that he had read or heard of: Yet, pag. 62. his Lordſhip ſays, That if what the Commons meant by Abdication, was never intended to relate any farther then to the King himſelf, he believ'd his own Opinion would be to concur to ſecure us againſt his Return to govern us. Now, *Roger*, if taking the Government out of the Hands of a King, who had not reſign'd it, according to the Earl's own Senſe, was not Coercion, let the World judge.

Country-m. Coercion, Maſter! That is ſuch plain Coercion, to take the Government from a King, who had made no voluntary Reſignation of it, and to offer to prevent his Return to it, that I think my Lord *Clarendon* ſpoke juſt in the Language of one of the old *Engliſh* Barons, whom the *Rehearſer* has damn'd to the Pit for Rebellion. So that I find, Maſter, all muſt be damn'd, according to him, his Friends, as well as his Foes.

Obſ. Well, *Roger*, we muſt not have temporal Lords damn'd alone, therefore we ſhall bring a ſpiritual Lord to bear them Company, and that's the late Lord Biſhop of *Ely*; who, pag. 57. aſſerts an original Compact, and that a King may forfeit for breaking it: But I will give you his own Words, *Roger*, thus; 'But here is one Thing that is men-'tion'd in this Vote, which I would have well 'conſider'd, for the Preſervation of the Succeſſion; 'and that is the original Compact that was made 'at the firſt Time, when the Government was firſt 'inſtituted, and the Conditions that each [illegible] of 'the Government ſhould obſerve on their part; 'of which, this was the moſt fundamental, That 'the King, Lords, and Commons, in Parliament 'aſſembl'd, ſhould have the Power of making new 'Laws, and altering of old ones.

Country-m. Aye, Maſter, that's damnable Doctrine indeed, according to the *Rehearſer*, to ſay, That any Body could inſtitute Governments, but God; and yet I defy him to ſhew me one Text, that ever the Almighty appointed this Government the Biſhop ſpeaks of in *England*. But what is ſtill worſe, the Biſhop gives the Lords and Commons a joint Power with the King, in making and altering Laws; by which he expreſsly condemns King *James*, who took upon him to diſpenſe with Laws without them.

Obſ. 'Tis certainly ſo, *Roger*; but the Biſhop, in pag. 59. teaches more damnable Doctrine ſtill, for his Words are, 'So that all I conceive ought to 'be meant by our Vote, is but a ſetting aſide the 'Perſon that broke the Contract: And in a ſucceſſive Kingdom, an Abdication can only be a 'Forfeiture as to the Perſon himſelf. So that here you ſee the Biſhop aſſerted, That a King might forfeit his Power; and the Earl of *Rocheſter* agrees with him, pag. 89. which is ſuch damnable Doctrine, according to the *Rehearſer* and his Party, that I am afraid they will ſcarce have ſo much Charity, as to pray the poor Biſhop's Soul out of Purgatory, ſince he was ſuch an Arch-rebel, as to agree to ſet his King aſide; notwithſtanding the Clauſe in the Act of Uniformity, That it was a trayterous Poſition, to take Arms, by his Authority, againſt his Perſon, or againſt thoſe that are commiſſion'd by him; and notwithſtanding the Declaration in the 13th of *Car.* 2. That it was not lawful, upon any Pretence whatever, to take Arms againſt the King; yet this Biſhop, pag. 56. was for providing for the Adminiſtration, whether the King were here, or gone away.

Country-m. Was there none but the Earl of *Clarendon*, the Earl of *Rocheſter*, and the Biſhop, for preventing the King's Return to the Government, Maſter?

Obſ. Yes, yes, *Roger*; the Earl of *Nottingham*, and the whole Houſe of Lords, were all of Opinion to ſecure the Nation againſt the Return of King *James*, as will appear by their Books, and by the Debates, pag. 30 and 66. and according to the Lord Chief Juſtice *Pollexfen*'s Opinion, pag. 99. 'Whoſoever takes from the King the Exerciſe of 'the Government, takes from the King his King-'ſhip; for the Power, and the Exerciſe of the Pow-'er, are ſo join'd, that they cannot be ſever'd. And pag. 100. he adds, 'And if it be ſo, and it 'be utterly unlawful, and as great a Crime (as 'what Law ſaith it is not?) to make away from the 'King the Exerciſe of the Government, as to take 'from him the Government, then it may do well 'for your Lordſhips to conſider, whether you are 'not guilty of the ſame Crime and Thing, which 'you would decline by your Amendment? Pag. 101. he ſays, 'If King *James* be our King ſtill, we 'can't by any Means agree to the keeping him out 'of the Kingdom; for if it be his Right to be King 'ſtill,

'ſtill, God forbid but that he ſhould enjoy it, and 'be admitted to the Exerciſe of it again. And pag. 102. he concludes thus, 'But if the Right be ſtill 'in him to have a Regency upon him without his 'own Conſent, or till his Return, we take it to be 'a ſtrange and impracticable Thing, *&c.*

Country-m. Certainly, Maſter, this proves beyond Poſſibility of a Reply, that both Parties were agreed, that the late King *James* did not willingly part with the Exerciſe of his Government; that their taking it from him, was Coercion with a Witneſs; and that they did not underſtand the Clauſes in the Act of Uniformity, and in 13 *Car.* 2. as the *Rehearſer* does; but that they were only meant of a King governing according to Law; otherwiſe they would have expreſsly repeal'd them for their own Safety; ſince, according to the *Rehearſer*'s Interpretation of 'em, they were all guilty of high Treaſon. But be that how it will, they are certainly repeal'd in the *Rehearſer*'s Senſe of 'em, ſince the Lords and Commons did then agree in a Vote, that it was inconſiſtent with our Religion and Laws, to have a Papiſt to reign over us; and have ſince enacted, by a poſitive Law, as I have told him again and again, That if any King or Queen turn Papiſt, or marry a Papiſt, we are abſolv'd from our Allegiance to ſuch a King or Queen. So that if they ſhould offer to keep the Government, which they forfeit by tranſgreſſing that Law, it could be no Crime in the Nation to diſpoſſeſs them by Arms; which, together with the repealing of that Clauſe in the Act of Uniformity, proves to a Demonſtration, that the very Propoſition laid down in that Clauſe, *That it is not lawful, upon any Pretence whatſoever, to take Arms againſt the King*, is repeal'd; for 'tis impoſſible, that that Clauſe, in the *Rehearſer*'s Senſe, and this poſterior Law, which juſtifies us to refuſe Allegiance to any King or Queen that turns Papiſt, or marries a Papiſt, can both be in Force together.

Country-m. Well, Maſter, the *Rehearſer* and his Friends will now ſee their Miſtake in alledging, that they ſhould hear no more from you on this Subject; for you have very fairly hunted down their roaring Lyons and ranging Bears, as the wiſeſt of Kings calls wicked Rulers, *Prov.* 28. 15. But here's the Speech of the Lords Commiſſioners to the Parliament, Maſter; I deſire your Thoughts upon it.

Obſ. The Subject is too noble and copious, *Roger*, to be diſcours'd of in our narrow Limits; therefore all I ſhall ſay of it at preſent, is, That I take it to be one of the greateſt Blows to the Deſigns of the *Rehearſer*, and the Faction for whom he writes, that has yet been given them; for if all Occaſions of Diviſion be avoided at Home, the War purſu'd with Vigour Abroad, the Union confirm'd and improv'd, Trade encourag'd, and the Deſigns of the Pretender, and his open or ſecret Abettors, defeated, as her Majeſty is graciouſly pleas'd to recommend they ſhould, the *Rehearſer* and his Party, with their great Patron the *French* King, will find themſelves under ſuch an effectual Coercion, as gives us Reaſon to hope, that Tyranny and Popery ſhall not henceforward be able to diſturb the Peace of her Majeſty's Dominions; and that the Mouths of all the Advocates of Slavery ſhall be ſtopt for ever.

Country-m. It rejoyc'd my Heart, Maſter, when I read, that her Majeſty had the confirming and improving the Union ſo much at Heart, as to remind the Houſes of preparing ſuch Bills as ſhall be thought conducing to that End; for I hope, Maſter, our Parliament will from hence take Occaſion to enquire into the Practices of thoſe, who have done all they could to defeat our Hopes from the Union, and to make it an Inſtrument of Slavery, by continuing or increaſing of arbitrary Proceedings in the Matter of Elections, or otherwiſe, in any Part of the Iſland; and that none be ſuffer'd to continue in the Adminiſtration, who have acted contrary to any of our fundamental Liberties, or are known to be of ſuch uncharitable Principles, as are inconſiſtent with Union and Chriſtian Forbearance among Proteſtants; otherwiſe, I am certain, the Union betwixt the two Kingdoms can neither be confirm'd or improv'd.

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